

Message Text

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S E C R E T ATHENS 8398

LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PLOS GR TU US

SUBJECT: SECURITY COUNCIL CONSIDERATION OF THE AEGEAN DISPUTE

REF: ATHENS 8310

1. DURING A CONVERSATION THIS EVENING (AUG 13) WITH JOHN TZOUNIS, DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS AND THE MFA'S TOP STRATEGIST ON THE AEGEAN PROBLEM, THE AMBASSADOR SOUGHT OUT THE GOG'S POSITION ON THE SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE AND WHAT THE GOG MIGHT CONSIDER ACCEPTABLE AS TO A POSSIBLE RESOLUTION ON THE SUBJECT. TZOUNIS RESPONDED QUICKLY BY REJECTING FORTHWITH AN IDEA HE HAD BEEN INFORMED WAS CURRENTLY BEING FLOATED IN NEW YORK THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL MERELY MAKE A STATEMENT URGING THE RECONCILIATION OF BOTH SIDES. THERE DEFINITELY MUST BE A RESOLUTION, HE EMPHASIZED.

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2. FROM THE GREEK POINT OF VIEW, TZOUNIS BEGAN, THE RESOLUTION MUST HAVE TWO ELEMENTS: A) IT SHOULD MENTION THE TWO SIDES REFRAINING FROM FURTHER ACTS WHICH MIGHT PROMOTE TENSION IN THE AEGEAN; B) IT MUST REFER TO THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE (ICJ). EXPLAINING HIS FIRST POINT, TZOUNIS COMMENTED THAT THE RESOLUTION WOULD NOT NECESSARILY HAVE TO STIPULATE A STRONGLY QUALIFIED TERM SUCH AS "PROVOCATIVE ACTS," BUT WOULD HAVE TO REFER TO SOMETHING ALONG THE LINES OF "REFRAINING FROM FURTHER ACTS WHICH MIGHT INCREASE TENSION" IN THE AREA.

3. AS TO THE SECOND POINT OF THE RESOLUTION, HE SAID THAT SOME REFERENCE TO THE ICJ WAS LIKEWISE ESSENTIAL. HE SAID GREECE HAD GONE TO THE ICJ IN ORDER TO HAVE THE COURT CLARIFY SOME OF THE RULES, SPECIFICALLY WHETHER OR NOT THE ISLANDS DID OR DID NOT HAVE CONTINENTAL SHELVES OF THEIR OWN. THE ICJ COULD ALSO "ELUCIDATE" CERTAIN OTHER GUIDELINES WHICH WOULD BE MOST BENEFICIAL IN FACILITATING THE PROGRESS OF FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY. SINCE GREECE HAS ALREADY GONE TO THE ICJ, HE CONTINUED, WORDING IN THE SC RESOLUTION TO THE EFFECT THAT BOTH PARTIES SHOULD CONTINUE TO NEGOTIATE BILATERALLY AND THEN GO TO THE ICJ ON THE "UNRESOLVED ISSUES" WOULD NOT BE ACCEPTABLE. IF SUCH A FORMULA WERE ADOPTED, THE TURKS COULD DELAY FOR YEARS IN USELESS NEGOTIATIONS BEFORE EVENTUALLY GOING TO THE COURT. HE CONCEDED, HOWEVER, THERE WOULD BE NO DIFFICULTY WITH BOTH COUNTRIES CONTINUING THEIR BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS ON THE AEGEAN AT THE SAME TIME THE ICJ WAS CONSIDERING THE ISSUE. HE SAID HE EXPECTED THE ICJ'S DETERMINATION IN THE NOT TOO DISTANT FUTURE, EVEN IF THE TURKS ASKED FOR A DELAY.

4. AS TO WHAT THE TURKS WOULD ACCEPT, TZOUNIS SAID HE COULD NOT COMMENT. THEY HAVE TOLD US THEIR POSITION IN THEIR REPLIES TO OUR NOTES, BUT "BUT YOU CANNOT TRUST WHAT THEY SAY." WE DO NOT CLAIM THE AEGEAN AS A "GREEK LAKE," AND WE DO RECOGNIZE TURKEY HAS SOME RIGHTS, INCLUDING A CONTINENTAL SHELF, IN THE AEGEAN, HE STATED.

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5. TZOUNIS SAID FORMIN BITSIOS WOULD PROBABLY STAY IN NEW YORK UNTIL THE RESOLUTION WAS VOTED. TZOUNIS ALSO URGED THAT WHATEVER STATEMENTS USG OFFICIALS MADE IN PUBLIC, BE VERY CAREFULLY DRAWN AND TAKE INTO ACCOUNT GREEK DOMESTIC REALITIES AND NOT GIVE CAUSE UNFAVORABLE EFFECTS ON US-GREEK RELATIONS.

6. ON RELATED SUBJECTS, TZOUNIS MENTIONED THAT THE GREEK UNARMED NAVAL VESSEL NAUTILUS WAS, INDEED, SHADOWING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SISMIK I AT A RANGE OF ABOUT 1,000 YARDS (OTHER NAVAL UNITS HE ALLOWED, WERE SHADOWING AT A GREATER DISTANCE). HE DENIED TURK CLAIMS OF GREEK HARASSMENT. ON THE CONTRARY, HE ADDED, THE NAUTILUS WAS BEING HARASSED BY TURKISH AIRCRAFT FLYING AT LOW ALTITUDES. TZOUNIS ALSO REVEALED THAT QUITE UNEXPECTEDLY THE LIBYAN AMBASSADOR HAD COME TO SEE HIM TODAY TO OFFER HIS NATION'S SERVICES TO MEDIATE THE GREEK-TURKISH DISPUTE. WITH AN AMUSED EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE, TZOUNIS THEN RECITED WHAT HE SAID WAS AN OLD TURKISH PROVERB SAYING: "TRUST NEITHER AN ARAB NOR AN ARAB'S FRIEND."
KUBISCH

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